

REMARKS

Claims 1, 5, and 10 have been amended. Claims 2, 6, and 11 have been cancelled. Claims 15-17 have been added. Support for the amendments can be found in lines 4-31 on page 3 of Applicant's specification. Claims 1, 3-5, 7-10, and 12-17 are currently pending in the application.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-5, 7-10, and 12-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rossi et al. (USPN 6,974,973; hereinafter "Rossi") in view of Borg (EPAP 1 117 250 A2). Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the application.

Applicant has amended the claims to more clearly define the invention. The claims were not amended in response to the references cited by the Examiner, as will be evident by the arguments below.

The Examiner states on page 2 of the advisory action that Borg teaches transferring signals substantially simultaneously from each of the plurality of sample and hold circuits to an operational amplifier. Applicant respectfully submits Borg does not teach this aspect of the claimed invention. Borg states the sample and hold circuits are included in the column amplifiers ([paragraph 0023]). The output of each column amplifier 58, 68, 78 is sequentially selected by the multiplexer (90), "and the output of each section 4 column amplifier is sequentially compared to the reference signal output from amplifier 38 to provide a difference output signal" ([paragraph 0022]). Thus, the signals in Borg's sample and hold circuits are transferred sequentially, and not simultaneously.

The Examiner further states on page 3 of the advisory action that the column amplifier 38 in Borg produces a substantially average signal for each row of dark pixels. Independent claim 10, however, states (and stated prior to this amendment) "the operational amplifier averages the signals from the sample and hold circuits for providing an approximate average dark reference pixel signal." Nothing in Borg or Rossi teaches or suggests an amplifier averaging the signals. Nor do Borg and Rossi teach averaging the signals received from the sample and hold circuits.

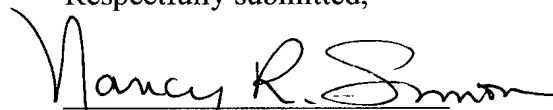
And finally, the Examiner notes on page 3 of the advisory action that Rossi does not explicitly teach that the "pixels are read out simultaneously, or on one clock cycle, from the sample and hold circuits." The Examiner then argues on pages 3 and 4 of the advisory action that the "teachings of Borg would have motivated

someone having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to read out the dark reference signals of Rossi simultaneously, onto one output line, in order to compensate for row-wise fixed pattern noise.” Applicant does not see how Borg motivates anyone to transfer signals out simultaneously, or on one clock cycle, from the sample and hold circuits. As noted earlier, and expressly stated in Borg, the output of each column amplifier 58, 68, 78 is *sequentially* selected by the multiplexer 90, “and the output of each section 4 column amplifier is *sequentially* compared to the reference signal output from amplifier 38 to provide a difference output signal” ([paragraph 0023]). Therefore, for at least the following reasons, Applicant’s independent claims 1, 5, and 10 are not obvious in view of Rossi and Borg.

“If an independent claim is not rendered obvious by prior art, then any claim depending from the independent claim is not obvious.” In re Fine, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) (see also M.P.E.P. § 2143.03). Claims 3, 4, and 15 depend from independent claim 1, claims 7-9 and 16 depend from independent claim 5, and claims 12-14 and 17 depend from independent claim 10. Since the combination of Rossi and Borg does not render independent claims 1, 5, and 10 obvious, dependent claims 3, 4, 7-9, and 12-17 are also not obvious in view of Rossi and Borg.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration of this patent application is respectfully requested. A prompt and favorable action by the Examiner is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner believe any remaining issues may be resolved via a telephone interview, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants’ representative at the number below to discuss such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy R. Simon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "N" and a stylized "S".

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If the Examiner is unable to reach the Applicant(s) Attorney at the telephone number provided, the Examiner is requested to communicate with Eastman Kodak Company Patent Operations at (585) 477-4656.